

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims**

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A trial management system, comprising:  
a storage section storing one or more functions that are to be trial targets;  
a trial instruction giving section for receiving a user's instruction on a trial for at least one function of the functions;  
a specifying section for specifying the at least one function, a trial of which is started, according to the instruction received by said trial instruction giving section; and  
a control section for setting a trial period for the trial of the function specified by said specifying section in accordance with the instruction received by said trial instruction giving section,  
wherein, if when said control section detects expiration of the trial period for the function during execution of a job thereof, the trial period for the function being set according to the instruction received by said trial instruction giving section, then said control section postpones the expiration of the trial period for the function until the time the job of the function is actually completed and if said control section detects expiration of the trial period for the function when no job is being executed, the trial period expires with no postponement.

Claim 2 (Original): The trial management system set forth in claim 1, wherein said trial instruction giving section receives the user's instruction in the form of input of a trial key associated with each function.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The trial management system set forth in claim 2, wherein:

the trial key includes data of said function itself and trial-use limitations imposed thereon, and

when the trial key is inputted to said trial instruction giving section, said control section sets the trial period for the function specified by the trial key received by said trial instruction giving section according to the trial-use limitations indicated by the trial key received by said trial instruction giving section.

**Claim 4 (Previously Presented):** The trial management system set forth in claim 2, wherein the trial key includes a trial key in the form of a start trial button, and a trial key in the form of an electronic key which is a code to release a program subject to access-protect from the access-protect.

**Claim 5 (Previously Presented):** The trial management system set forth in claim 1, wherein said control section judges whether or not the function specified in the instruction received by said trial instruction giving section is operational, and sets only those which are operational to be available in a trial mode.

**Claim 6 (Previously Presented):** The trial management system set forth in claim 1, wherein said control section changes the trial period for said function.

**Claim 7 (Canceled).**

**Claim 8 (Previously Presented):** The trial management system set forth in claim 6, wherein:

    said trial instruction giving section receives the user's instruction in the form of a specified key associated with the trial period of each function, and

    said control section sets the trial period of the function according to data of the trial period indicated by the specified key received by said trial instruction giving section.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The trial management system set forth in claim 8, wherein said control section judges whether or not the specified key received by said trial instruction giving section indicates data which extends the trial period, and extends the trial period for the function specified by said trial instruction giving section when the specified key indicates the data which extends the trial period.

Claim 10 (Original): The trial management system set forth in claim 8, wherein said control section judges whether or not the specified key received by said trial instruction giving section indicates correct data, and when an incorrect specified key is inputted a predetermined number of times, said control section terminates the trial period for the function specified by said trial instruction giving section.

Claim 11 (Original): The trial management system set forth in claim 8, wherein said control section judges whether or not the specified key is an authorized key which gives an instruction to terminate the trial period so as to proceed to a state of authorized use, and when the specified key received by said trial instruction giving section is the authorized key, said control section terminates the trial period for the function specified by said trial instruction giving section and proceeds to the state of authorized use.

Claim 12 (Original): The trial management system set forth in claim 8, wherein said control section judges whether or not an environment which is essential to carrying out the function received by said trial instruction giving section is completely available, and when the environment essential to carrying out the function received by said trial instruction giving section is not completely available, said control section terminates the trial period for the function specified by said trial instruction giving section.

Claim 13 (Original): The trial management system set forth in claim 1, wherein said trial instruction giving section is an operation panel which is provided with a key group for receiving the user's instruction and a display section for displaying guidance information including a process status with respect to the user.

**Claim 14 (Previously Presented):** The trial management system set forth in claim 13, wherein:

said storage section stores a plurality of functions to be trial targets, and  
said display section displays a list of some of said plurality of functions which are confirmed as available.

**Claim 15 (Original):** The trial management system set forth in claim 14, wherein said display section displays a list of trial periods for the respective functions together with the list of some of said plurality of functions available.

**Claim 16 (Original):** The trial management system set forth in claim 1, further comprising a communications board for sending inputted image information to an external device which is a transmission destination, under the control of said specifying section.

**Claim 17 (Original):** The trial management system set forth in claim 1, further comprising a scanner for scanning a desired document image as image information, under the control of said specifying section.

**Claim 18 (Original):** The trial management system set forth in claim 1, further comprising an image processing unit for performing predetermined image processing with respect to inputted image information, under the control of said specifying section.

**Claim 19 (Original):** The trial management system set forth in claim 1, further comprising a storage device for temporarily storing image information, under the control of said specifying section.

**Claim 20 (Original):** The trial management system set forth in claim 1, further comprising a printer for printing out inputted image information.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The trial management system set forth in claim 1, further comprising a network scanner function as one of the functions to be the target of trial, whereby image data scanned by a device is transferred to another.

Claim 22 (Original): The trial management system set forth in claim 1, further comprising an e-mail function as one of the functions to be the target of trial, whereby scanned image data is transmitted in the form of an attachment file of an e-mail.

Claim 23 (Original): The trial management system set forth in claim 1, further comprising a security function as one of the functions to be the target of trial, whereby image data once printed out is erased.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): A program tangibly embodied on a computer-readable medium which causes a computer to function as a control section in a trial management system, the trial management system including:

a storage section storing one or more functions that are to be trial targets;

a trial instruction giving section for receiving a user's instruction on a trial for at least one function of the functions;

a specifying section for specifying the at least one function, a trial of which is started, according to the instruction received by said trial instruction giving section, wherein

said control section sets a trial period for the trial of the function specified by said specifying section in accordance with the instruction received by said trial instruction giving section, and

if when said control section detects expiration of the trial period for the function during execution of a job thereof, the trial period for the function being set according to the instruction received by said trial instruction giving section, then said control section postpones the expiration of the trial period for the function until the time the job of the function is actually completed and if said control section detects expiration of the trial period for the function when no job is being executed, the trial period expires with no postponement.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): A computer-readable recording medium, wherein recorded is a program for causing a computer to function as a control section in a trial management system, the trial management system including:

a storage section storing one or more functions that are to be trial targets;

a trial instruction giving section for receiving a user's instruction on a trial for at least one function of the functions;

a specifying section for specifying the at least one function, a trial of which is started, according to the instruction received by said trial instruction giving section, wherein

said control section sets a trial period for the trial of the function specified by said specifying section in accordance with the instruction received by said trial instruction giving section, and

if when said control section detects expiration of the trial period for the function during execution of a job thereof, the trial period for the function being set according to the instruction received by said trial instruction giving section, then said control section postpones the expiration of the trial period for the function until the time the job of the function is actually completed and if said control section detects expiration of the trial period for the function when no job is being executed, the trial period expires with no postponement.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): A trial management system, comprising:

a storage section storing one or more functions that are to be trial targets;

a user input section supplied with a user's instruction on a trial for at least one of the functions; and

a processing section for specifying the at least one function, a trial of which is started, according to the instruction supplied to the user input section and for setting a trial period for the trial of the specified function in accordance with the instruction supplied to the user input section,

wherein, if when the processing section detects expiration of the trial period for the function during execution of a job thereof, the trial period for the function being set according to the instruction supplied to user input section, then the processing section postpones the expiration of the trial period for the function until the time the job of the function is actually

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completed and if the processing section detects expiration of the trial period for the function when no job is being executed, the trial period expires with no postponement.